

Woolworth Building

233 Broadway, New York

From its completion in 1913 until 1930, this was the world's tallest building. It stands as a monument not only to Frank W. Woolworth, originator of the variety chain store and the building's sponsor, but also to its architect, Cass Gilbert, who won acclaim for his brilliant adaptation of Gothic architecture and detail to a skyscraper. It was a New York clergyman who first called it "the Cathedral of Commerce," a nickname it still bears. Although it has long since lost its crown as the world's tallest, the Woolworth Building has seldom been surpassed in proclaiming the tall-building ethic with such soaring verticality.